

TROT testimony on HB713.pdf

Uploaded by: Barbara Sollner-Webb

Position: FAV

Testimony on HB713 ("Horse Riding - Helmet Requirement for Minors")

I am Barbara Sollner-Webb-Webb (17200 Melbourne Dr, Laurel MD), a life-time Maryland resident and a small farm owner who loves to enjoy Maryland's beautiful green areas by trail riding on my sweet horses. I am a long-time active member of Trail Riders of Today ("TROT"), a 42-year-old nonprofit organized under the laws of Maryland that is dedicated to advancing equestrian trail riding, trails and open spaces.

Today I am speaking for TROT's well over 200 Maryland members to convey that we strongly support HB713. It is important legislation and seems a brilliant public health initiative.

Almost every equestrian has had, or knows someone who had, a "freak accident" where possible serious brain injury was averted or at least minimized due to the rider wearing a helmet. [I personally would likely have been permanently impaired if not for the protection from my helmet in a bad horse accident ages ago.] For decades, TROT required that helmets be worn by everyone who participates in a TROT-sponsored trail ride or other mounted event. TROT has also encouraged all members to wear a helmet whenever they are out riding and to urge their family and friends wear them too, especially minors. According to a recent UCONN Animal Science study, helmets can reduce the possibility of death by head injury by 70-80% (<<https://animalscience.uconn.edu/equine/helmet-safety.php>>). Indeed, a recent TROT membership survey reaffirmed that our members strongly favor requiring helmets for all riders, with well over 90% membership support for requiring helmets by minor riders.

Parenthetically, while TROT strongly supports legislation requiring helmets for all minors riding horses on public land and would be pleased if it would also apply to riding on private land, we fear some individuals may resist such a requirement for private land, so would be more comfortable if HB713 were clarified with an amendment adding the word "public" to the phrase "a horse riding path" in (c)(2)(I)2.

To help protect Maryland's youths from suffering a serious brain injury when riding horses on public lands, please pass HB713.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Testimony BIAMD HB713 support .pdf

Uploaded by: Catherine Mello

Position: FAV



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Delegate Kumar Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Transportation and Environment Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support-HB713 Vehicle Laws-Horse Riding-Helmet Requirements for Minors

Dear Delegate Barve, Delegate Stein and Members of the Transportation and Environment Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Brain Injury Association of Maryland (BIAMD) in support of HB713. Through its Toll-Free Brain injury Connection Center (1.800.221.6443), its website (www.biamd.org), and its social media presence, for the past 39 years, BIAMD has sought to educate, enlighten, and support the estimated 120,000 Maryland families currently living with the devastating effects of brain injury and the caregivers and professionals who support them. We support policies that prevent brain injuries or reduce the severity of brain injuries of Marylanders.

Symptoms and impact of a brain injury vary based on the part of the brain injured, severity of injury and the age or development of each child. A person's brain is not fully formed until they are in their early to mid-twenties. The full impact of a brain injury during childhood may not be fully evident until the child is expected to navigate more complex social, cognitive, and academic expectations. A brain injury in childhood can have life long consequences for both child and their family.

There are no concussion proof helmets, but research shows that equestrian helmets do reduce the severity of traumatic brain injury and reduce the likelihood that a person will sustain a skull fractureⁱ. Unhelmeted riders are more likely to have skull fractures and intracranial bleeding than those who were wearing helmets when they sustained their injuriesⁱⁱ. The American Medical Equestrian Association calculates that ASTM/SEI approved helmets have reduced all riding-related head injuries by 30% and severe head injuries by 50%. Based on data from MIEMMS, 28% of minors treated for TBI related falls in equestrian sports were not wearing a helmet. Requiring a supervising adult to ensure that these children are wearing a well-fitting helmet approved by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) give the best chance of minimizing injuries, should the unexpected occur. No matter how experienced a rider is or how well trained a horse is, there will always be situations that can occur that are out of their control, like a stumble or loud noise.

We ask you for a favorable report for HB 713.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,
Catherine Rinehart Mello
Brain Injury Association of Maryland
443-364-9856

ⁱ Connor TA, Clark JM, Jayamohan J, Stewart M, McGoldrick A, Williams C, Seemungal BM, Smith R, Burek R, Gilchrist MD. Do equestrian helmets prevent concussion? A retrospective analysis of head injuries and helmet damage from real-world equestrian accidents. *Sports Med Open*. 2019 May 24;5(1):19. doi: 10.1186/s40798-019-0193-0. PMID: 31127396; PMCID: PMC6534639.

ⁱⁱ Bier G, Bongers MN, Othman A, Hempel JM, Vieth V, Heindel W, Ernemann U, Burg MC. Impact of helmet use in equestrian-related traumatic brain injury: a matched-pairs analysis. *Br J Neurosurg*. 2018 Feb;32(1):37-43. doi: 10.1080/02688697.2017.1409874. Epub 2017 Dec 5. PMID: 29205071.

Proposed Amend Sponsor HB713

Uploaded by: Delegate Lehman Delegate Lehman

Position: FAV



HB0713/623023/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

04 FEB 22
15:58:59

BY: Delegate Lehman

(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 713

(First Reading File Bill)

On page 2, in line 10, after “A” insert “PUBLIC”.

HB713_Helmets_KennedyKrieger_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Arneson

Position: FAV



DATE: February 17, 2022 **COMMITTEE:** Environment and Transportation
BILL NO: House Bill 713
BILL TITLE: Vehicle Laws - Horse Riding - Helmet Requirement for Minors
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports House Bill 713 - Vehicle Laws - Horse Riding - Helmet Requirement for Minors.

Bill Summary:

House Bill 713 – requires a minor that is riding a horse on a highway, public horse-riding path or other property open to pedestrian or vehicular traffic must wear a properly fitted and secured helmet.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger Institute provides specialized services to patients nationally and internationally. Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger’s services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based and community-based programs.

Kennedy Krieger Institute has led the nation in evaluation and rehabilitation of children with traumatic brain injury (TBI) for more than 40 years. We are experts in caring for children with all etiologies and severity of TBI, ranging from children with concussion to those in coma due to very severe TBI.

Rationale:

Horseback riding is known to be associated with a risk of TBI due to fall/throw from a horse. TBIs account for approximately one-quarter of emergency room visits related to horseback riding and up to 50% of all horse-related injuries. TBIs related to horseback riding span the entire range of injury severity, from concussion through very severe injuries with complex skull fractures and multiple sites of bleeding within and around the brain. Children are at higher risk than adults for more severe forms of brain injury related to horseback riding, due to greater head-to-body size ratio and thinner skull bones. While most children with concussion will experience recovery within a few months, children with more severe injuries typically experience life-long impairments in motor, thinking, and behavioral skills which impact their social relationships and academic/vocational opportunities.

Helmets have repeatedly been shown to protect children from more severe brain injuries related to horseback riding. Helmets are known to prevent skull fractures and associated bleeding around and within the brain. While wearing a helmet does not make a child “concussion-proof”, wearing a helmet does decrease the risk of TBI, decrease overall injury severity, and decrease the likelihood of admission to an intensive care unit. Researchers have compared the severity and mortality of injuries incurred riding horseback without a helmet to those of being struck by a car.

Fortunately, helmets are accessible and proven to decrease severity of injury. We have an opportunity to prevent and/or reduce the severity of TBI occurring in children in Maryland. It is important that we take this opportunity to protect our children before even one more unnecessary injury occurs.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on House Bill 713.

Referenced Literature:

Head and Spinal Injuries in Equestrian Sports: Update on Epidemiology, Clinical Outcomes, and Injury Prevention.
Gates JK, Lin CY. *Curr Sports Med Rep*. 2020 Jan;19(1):17-23. doi:10.1249/JSR.0000000000000674. PMID: 31913919

Impact of helmet use in equestrian-related traumatic brain injury: a matched-pairs analysis.

Bier G, Bongers MN, Othman A, Hempel JM, Vieth V, Heindel W, Ernemann U, Burg MC. *Br J Neurosurg*. 2018 Feb;32(1):37-43. doi: 10.1080/02688697.2017.1409874. Epub 2017 Dec 5. PMID: 29205071

Helmet under-utilization by children during equestrian events is associated with increased traumatic brain injury.

Short SS, Fenton SJ, Scaife ER, Bucher BT. *J Pediatr Surg*. 2018 Mar;53(3):545-547. doi: 10.1016/j.jpedsurg.2017.03.043. Epub 2017 Mar 20. PMID: 28365105

Non-fatal horse related injuries treated in emergency departments in the United States, 2001-2003.

Thomas KE, Annest JL, Gilchrist J, Bixby-Hammett DM. *Br J Sports Med*. 2006 Jul;40(7):619-26. doi: 10.1136/bjism.2006.025858. Epub 2006 Apr 12.

Evelyn Samman Testimony HB 713 Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Evelyn Samman

Position: FAV

Evelyn M. Samman

Testimony in Support of House Bill 713
House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 17, 2022

Good afternoon, Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein and members of the committee. My name is Evelyn Samman, and I am here to testify in support of House Bill 713.

I am 10 years old and a member of Waredaca Pony Club in Montgomery County. I have a horse named Simba and have been riding most of my life. My grandmother even bought me a riding helmet before I was born.

I think passing this bill is important because:

1. Helmets keep your head safe, so you don't damage or badly injure your head during a fall.
2. And the U.S. Pony Club manual even says: "Helmets must be worn with chinstraps fastened and properly fitted **whenever you are on a horse or pony.**"
3. Lastly, Maryland already requires kids to wear bicycle helmets when biking on public roadways that are used by cars and people walking. So, it makes sense if you are riding a horse, you should wear a helmet too.

Thank you very much for your time and I respectfully request a favorable committee report on this bill.

MHC_testimony_HB_713.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Webster

Position: FAV

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on
HB 713- Vehicle Laws- Horse Riding- Helmet Requirement for Minors: SUPPORT

Medical Examiner reports show that 60% or more of horse-related deaths are caused by head injuries. Helmets can reduce this possibility by 70-80%.

The American Medical Equestrian Association calculates that ASTM/SEI approved helmets have reduced all riding-related head injuries by 30% and severe head injuries by 50%.

Non-ASTM/SEI certified helmets offer no protection whatsoever and are strictly for cosmetic purposes.

Head injuries are responsible for more than 60% of horse-related deaths.

Head injuries are the most common reason for horse-related hospital admissions.

There are more horses per square mile in the state of Maryland than in any other state in the nation, including Kentucky, California, and Texas, and 51.8% of Maryland households contain at least one horse enthusiast.

Many horse organizations in Maryland, including Pony Clubs and horse show/ competition associations and venues already support and promote helmet safety and require that minors- and adults as well- wear ASTM/SEI approved helmets at all times while mounted. Many lesson stables do, as well, though some report receiving "pushback" from students and even parents of students, when trying to enforce their rules. Passing a statewide law would provide a legal backbone for lesson stable owner or trainer's own rules/ requirements.

Two other states in the nation, Florida and New York, already have helmet laws for minors in effect. Florida passed the law in 2009 and New York in 2013. In both states, the legislature was introduced in response to a horse-related, head injury death of a minor.

HB 713 EQUESTRIAN HELMET LEHMAN WRITTEN TESTIMONY.

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV

DELEGATE MARY A. LEHMAN
Legislative District 21
Prince George's and
Anne Arundel Counties

Environment and Transportation
Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 713 – VEHICLE LAWS – HORSE RIDING – HELMET REQUIREMENT
FOR MINORS**

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIR BARVE, VICE CHAIR STEIN AND ESTEEMED COLLEAGUES. I AM ASKING FOR YOUR FAVORABLE REPORT FOR HB 713, A BILL REQUIRING HELMETS FOR EQUESTRIANS UNDER AGE 18 RIDING ON PUBLIC TRAILS AND OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY.

THE BILL REQUIRES AN ADULT WHO IS PRESENT AND DIRECTLY SUPERVISING A MINOR TO ENSURE THAT THE YOUTH IS WEARING A PROPERLY FITTED AND SECURED HELMET THAT MEETS NATIONAL HEADGEAR SAFETY STANDARDS. FAILURE TO MEET THIS REQUIREMENT IS PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF NEGLIGENCE AND COULD RESULT IN A WRITTEN WARNING OR FINE UP TO \$100.

EQUESTRIAN INJURIES ARE PRIMARILY THE RESULT OF A FALL; AND FALLING FROM A HORSE IS NOT AN UNCOMMON OCCURRENCE. THE GOAL OF HB 713 IS TO PROTECT YOUNG EQUESTRIANS FROM GETTING A CONCUSSION OR

OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN OR HEAD INJURY BY REQUIRING THEM TO WEAR A HELMET.

THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS HAVE SEEN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO CONCUSSION SAFETY IN SPORTS. ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, A CONCUSSION IS A BRAIN INJURY CAUSED BY A BUMP OR BLOW TO THE HEAD THAT CAN CHANGE THE WAY THE BRAIN NORMALLY WORKS. THIS SUDDEN MOVEMENT CAN CAUSE THE BRAIN TO BOUNCE AROUND OR TWIST IN THE SKULL, CREATING CHEMICAL CHANGES IN THE BRAIN AND SOMETIMES STRETCHING AND DAMAGING BRAIN CELLS.

EVEN WHAT SEEMS TO BE A MILD BUMP ON THE HEAD CAN BE SERIOUS. CONCUSSIONS CAN RESULT IN SHORT-TERM MEMORY LOSS, DAMAGE TO THE VESTIBULAR AND OCULAR SYSTEMS, DIZZINESS AND MORE. WHILE THERE IS NO CONCUSSION-PROOF HELMET, AN EQUESTRIAN HELMET THAT MEETS OR EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF TESTING AND MATERIALS FOR PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR USED IN EQUESTRIAN RIDING, CAN HELP PROTECT MINORS.

HB 713 ONLY APPLIES TO MINORS HORSE RIDING ON HIGHWAYS, PUBLIC RIDING PATHS OR OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY. YOUTH PRACTICING FOR OR COMPETING IN EVENTS WHERE HELMETS ARE NOT WORN AND THOSE

ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THIS LEGISLATION. WHILE AN ADULT PRESENT AND DIRECTLY SUPERVISING A MINOR MAY BE CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION, THE MINOR WILL BE GIVEN EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS DESCRIBING THE LAW AND THE BENEFITS OF WEARING A HELMET. THE GOAL IS TO PREVENT SUBSEQUENT OCCURRENCES.

THE USE OF AN APPROPRIATE EQUESTRIAN HELMET SHOULD BE AS COMMON PLACE AS SEAT-BELTS. LIKE LAWS REQUIRING KIDS TO WEAR BIKE HELMETS OR SIT IN BOOSTER SEATS IN THE REAR OF A CAR TO SAFEGUARD THEM IN AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT, HB 713 WILL HELP SAFEGUARD YOUNG EQUESTRIANS FROM SERIOUS HEAD TRAUMA AS A RESULT OF A FALL. PROTECTING OUR KIDS FROM AVOIDABLE INJURIES SHOULD BE EVERYONE'S CONCERN.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. I URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT.

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MD House Bill 713_ Hopkins_2022-02-14.pdf

Uploaded by: Nancy Hopkins

Position: FAV

HOUSE BILL 713

A BILL ENTITLED: AN ACT concerning Vehicle Laws – Horse Riding – Helmet Requirement for Minors

I am the mother of a 15 year old equestrian who has been riding horses since she was seven years old. She has been thrown from a horse several times and each time avoided a concussion because she was wearing an approved helmet. Two of these falls resulted in an emergency room visit and confirmation that her helmet did its job in protecting her head. Per guidelines, her helmet was replaced each time her head hit the ground in a fall to ensure maximum protection should she fall again.

Horses get nervous when encountering something or someone unexpected. They can bolt, rear on their hind legs or both, causing the rider to be unseated. On public trails it is not uncommon to unexpectedly meet leashed and unleashed dogs, joggers and children on bicycles, along with wildlife. While many of these meetings are uneventful, each poses the risk of unpredictable behavior by one or more involved. Even an experienced rider can find themselves challenged to stay in the saddle and may land on the ground. My opinion is that minors should be required to wear protective helmets when riding on public land until they are old enough to fully understand and appreciate the related risk and benefits of protective headgear. I also believe that as adults they will choose to continue to wear a helmet.

Testimony HB713 Burk.pdf

Uploaded by: Rob Burk

Position: FAV

MD HB 713

Testimony by: Rob Burk
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Bio: Current Chief Executive Officer of the [United States Eventing Association \(USEA\)](#). Previously, served as an Executive Director, Senior Adviser, and Chief Operating Officer managing the programs and operations of federal, state, and non-profit boards, commissions, and committees including as the Executive Director of the Maryland Horse Industry Board within the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Research, Education and Economics Advisory Board. Has provided guidance to two Governors, three Maryland Secretaries of Agriculture, as well as the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and Congress. The parent of two daughters aged 11 and 15 who have been active horseback riders, riding regularly on public lands throughout the state.

Testimony: Today I write you in strong support of MD HB 713, referred to as the "Helmet Bill." Head injuries and concussions are some of the most common injuries experienced by equestrians. According to research by the University of Nevada, Reno, head injuries are associated with approximately 60% of all equestrian deaths and 18% of equestrian injuries. There is a simple solution to this issue and that is the use of modern helmets that meet established standards of protection for equestrian use. The precedent of requiring helmets is already well established in Maryland law, and HB 713 should be treated no differently in receiving the support of the Maryland legislature.

Liability is also a serious matter as it relates to land ownership and control. Maryland is a landowner of public lands and is ultimately liable for accidents which occur on its property. While the state would most likely be well protected from frivolous lawsuits related to equestrian head injuries of those not wearing helmets which occur on public lands, by passing this bill the Maryland legislature would make it extremely clear that protecting youth equestrian is a priority. This will hopefully set a precedent for all landowners in the state to follow and would show that Maryland is a leader among equestrian states when it comes to the protection of our youth.

Please step forward and support HB 713 to protect the brains of our future...it is a no brainer!